

# econews

ECOLOGY PARTY NEWSLETTER

Nº3 July~August 1979



Left to right: Jonathon Porritt, Mike Benfield, Teddy Goldsmith.

## Onwards and upwards

The results of our three candidates in the European Elections demonstrate another upward move in the fortunes of the Ecology Party. Jonathon Porritt, standing in London Central achieved 6448 votes (4.1% of the poll), Mike Benfield in Midlands Central captured 6380 votes (3.9%), while Teddy Goldsmith, standing in Cornwall and Plymouth polled 5125 votes (3.0%). Our total of 18,000 votes (an average of 3.6%) provides pleasing confirmation that our General Election results were indeed only the beginning, and not just a flash protest vote in the pan.

But apart from the result, it wasn't really much of an election, for us any more than anyone else. There was a conspiracy of determined silence from the major parties, aided and abetted by a politics-weary press. The Conservatives, resting on their ill-gotten laurels, made as little noise as possible for fear of bringing out the Labour vote; the Labour Party could have done something but didn't, their party workers enormously depressed by the General Election, and further weakened by the defection of large numbers of anti-marketeters; the Liberal Party would have done something, but couldn't, - being only marginally less impotent than ourselves, for all their 81 candidates.

The media played an enormously important role, and Mike Benfield made that the mainstay of his campaign, dreaming up one publicity stunt after another, even to the extent of traversing his constituency in a hot air balloon - much to the predictable amusement of the press!

In Cornwall, Teddy Goldsmith stormed into things with his usual panache, using leaflets, posters, walkabouts, and all the press coverage he could get. The sheer

size of his constituency was however very much against us, as was the presence of a very strong Mebyon Kernow candidate, who polled over 10,000 votes. There is little doubt that Devon would have been a more suitable constituency.

In London Central, we relied exclusively on leaflets and posters - the lingering presence of which are now something of an embarrassment! The relatively compact nature of this constituency enabled us to deliver 100,000 leaflets by hand within just 6 days!

We held one press conference, late on in the campaign, and were pleased with the reception we got; in terms of national coverage, with only 3 candidates, we were not able to make much of an impact, being very much in the minority bracket.

Yet again the Party owes much to the generosity of the membership: more than £1,000 was raised for the London campaign through contributions from the North Thames, South East, and London regions. Special mention must be made of the generosity of Mike Benfield and Teddy Goldsmith in particular, who contributed the greater part of their campaign expenses.

For all our earlier reservations about involvement in this election, it was a most important thing for the Party to have done. Without too much equivocation, we followed the line of our European colleagues in declaring a commitment to Europe, while rejecting the growth bound and bureaucratic excesses of the present Common Market. And in doing so we seem to have notched up another rung on the ladder!

Jonathon Porritt

## John Luck eased out at Rye

John Luck, an Ecology Councillor on Rother District Council, lost his seat in the recent local elections by 22 votes. John captured the seat from the Tories in the 1976 election, and was cautiously optimistic about retaining it this time round. However the line up was complicated by the presence of the 1976 elected Ratepayer who had turned Tory during the term of the Council, and a new Ratepayer candidate. In the event, the result was as follows:

Ratepayer.....	1784 (Elected)
Tory.....	1527 (Elected)
Tory (ex-Ratepayer).....	1007 (Elected)
Eco.....	985 (Not elected)

John attributes his defeat to the very late production of his election address, and to the fact that the District Elections were overshadowed by the General Election - his campaign suffered at the expense of Anne Rix's fight in the Rye constituency.

## ... and eased in?

John Luck has also served on Rye Town Council as a parish councillor, and this year was returned unopposed. At the first meeting of the Council, and much to his surprise, John was elected Deputy Mayor!

He also reports that there is to be a by-election for a seat on Rye Town Council. The local branch will be putting up a candidate, Eric Le Fevre, an architect who has practised in the town for 17 years. He is well known locally, and stands a good chance of being elected.

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## TUNNEL VISION

The NEC has decided to launch a major fundraising campaign to finance the establishment of a central party office. The target is £40,000, which will pay for an office and four paid officials (salaries up to £6,000 plus expenses), printing equipment and other administrative expenditure. This sum will be an annually recurring cost.

Clearly members of the NEC have shouldered a tremendous burden over the last six months, and a way of relieving the pressure must be found. But to centralize the Party organization around a London office is a step in the wrong direction. It is also an almost irreversible step, given the sort of financial commitment involved. As Alan Clarke made clear in the last newsletter, once on this particular roundabout, it is very difficult to get off.

The NEC seems to have been afflicted with a collective form of tunnel vision. How else can one explain the fact that they are attempting to resolve problems of Party administration solely in terms of economic efficiency? What about the costs of centralization, most of which cannot be totted up on a bureaucrats balance sheet?

## NO HIDING PLACE

The famous valedictory despatch by Sir Nico Henderson, our new Ambassador in Washington, set a test of responsible government. He deplored Britain's economic performance in an analysis with which we would not necessarily agree. But he then pointed out a disturbing parallel. The complacency and the reassuring smooth talk which we have become used to in recent years about our economics is, he said, rather like the failure of the British government between the wars to point out the real dangers of the rise of Nazi Germany.

So there *is* a cover-up. That's (almost) official. Governments fall all too easily into the role of the parent. They offer reassurance. They make soothing sounds at times of crisis. They insist that everything will turn out all right in the end. So long as you, dear child, put your trust in us. Stick by me, baby.

Why are governments so fond of parenthood? Could it be that it's what the voters like? Can we be sure that it is a tendency which voters shake off on signing up for membership of the Ecology Party?

There's room for doubt. There are signs that Ecologists, too, for all their ruthless analysis of economic and environmental trends, have got into dependent habits which they are finding it hard to throw off.

Take the question of unemployment. We agree that it's on a

rising trend. We agree that it's got a long way further to rise. We recognise that if the job you've lost is a job on a personality-destroying production line, that's at least some consolation.

And we know, of course, that when unemployment strikes, we'll still have the food and shelter and funds we need. Well, there'll be social security, won't there?. What's that???

You're old enough to know that the state is already virtually at the limits of its ability to pay a living wage through social security. As unemployment rises, the value of unemployment pay will go down in relation to the price of food and warmth. There is nothing the state, financed as it is by the formal economy, can do to guarantee security against material hardship on a massive scale.

There is no hiding place. As recession and the decline in the industrial state gather speed, the prospect of genuine hardship for more and more people will become real, whatever the state, in loco parentis, may try to do. The only solution to this will be the informal, decentralised, sustainable, community based economy, providing the primary needs — food and energy — independently of the collapsing industrial state.

It's a bitter pill to have to swallow. Unemployment on a large scale means hardship on a large scale. Unless that is, we get cracking right away with building the informal economy that the Ecology Party stands for.

It's beginning to look as though the essential incompetence of the state will start to be widely recognised within the lifetime of the present government.

David Fleming.

# NEWS

## ECO to fight Manchester Central?

In the near future, a date will be announced for a by-election in Manchester Central. The vacancy for the seat is caused by the elevation of Harold Lever to the House of Lords in Jim Callaghan's resignation Honours List.

The Manchester branch has not yet decided whether it will be contesting the seat, though many members in the region, and also in the rest of the country, are keen that the Party should do so.

One such member is Basil Mager, Regional Organizer of the South East Region, who has offered a donation towards the cost of the deposit. In a letter to the N.E.C. and various other members, he stated that: "The European Election results show that public opinion is moving in our direction. This by-election presents us with a great opportunity to maintain our momentum".

He recognises however that it is crucial that we mount a strong campaign. "The by-election results will indicate shifts of opinion since the general election, and will be studied more closely than any single result in that election".

The strong Leeds branch have offered support, and there is every reason to believe that we would achieve a very creditable result.

Peter Frings.

## Literature – should we use recycled paper?

Andrea Hodgkinson has been doing a magnificent job in distributing literature for the last five months and many thanks are due to her. In recent weeks her stocks of literature have run low and some members may have experienced delays in receiving their orders.

The reason for this is that we had to go carefully on committing the Party's working capital during the time of the election. However, you will be glad to hear that stocks have now built up again so that Andrea has a complete stock of all the Ecology Party's literature, posters, badges and other items.

Sorry about the delays to date, but from now on there should not be any problems here.

Many people have asked that the Ecology Party should print all its material on re-cycled paper. We have received a quote from our printers for the cost of doing this, and we find that the cost of using re-cycled paper is likely to increase charges by about 5%. This would be using Armageddon which is a paper which can be used on the printer's Web Offset machines – a method which allows us to get a good price for our printing.

In my view, we have no choice but to use re-cycled paper in the future. If readers have any comments on this I would be most grateful if they would get in touch with me at 104 South Hill Park, Hampstead NW3 2SN.

David Fleming

## Torness reoccupation

It now looks certain that the reactor site at Torness in Scotland will be re-occupied in September. A meeting of a section of the Torness Alliance in London on June 17th. decided to organize a week - long occupation beginning on September 9th. A support camp will be found near the site, and further meetings to discuss the occupation are to be held at the Capenhurst action in Chester on the 14th. July, and at the Torness Alliance meeting in Newcastle at the end of July.

The organizers stress that the emphasis of the occupation will be on direct action, which, they state, includes damage to property if this delays construction.

## Working party

The South West Regional Conference in Taunton on July 7th asked the Chippenham branch to set up a working party to look into printed publicity (leaflets, posters etc.) Digby Dodd, as Chairman, (Sparrow's Barton, Easton, Corsham, Wilts, SN13 9QD) would welcome all comments and suggestions.

## Dr John Beale

Eco has suffered a great loss in the sudden and tragic death of Dr. John Beale, who stood as our candidate for Brighton Pavilion in the General Election.

John was highly articulate, modest, hardworking; everyone who knew him liked him. He built up a group of Eco enthusiasts who, under his leadership, worked as a well integrated team.

For some years he had been on the committee of the Sussex branch of the Conservation Society, an organization on whose platforms he frequently spoke. He was instrumental in securing a closer working relationship between Eco and the non-political ConSoc: at the Society's AGM in April he moved a resolution, which was carried, welcoming the Ecology Party as an extension of conservationist ideas into the realm of politics.

He will be greatly missed, but he will be remembered as the work he so ably inspired is carried on. In addition, a memorial fund is being established to plant a tree in his memory. Donations should be sent to Valerie Collett, at 16 College Terrace, Brighton.

We in the Ecology Party offer our condolences to his wife and young son.

Basil Mager

# LETTERS

## The stable society: theory or slogan?

8 Vale Terrace,  
Calder Vale,  
Garstang.

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read the comments in ECONEWS 2 regarding my review of "Stable Society". Goldsmith's response was predictable and I will not comment on his attempt to "defuse" my criticisms by understanding them only as a personal attack on him, except to say that this amounts to one way of avoiding the thrust of the criticism. However, could I try to extend the debate by raising the following brief points?

The admission that "our experience is irreversible, we can only move toward the future . . . ." is a valuable one. The crucial point of difference here is that while we should learn what we can from the past, I do not believe that the study of tribal societies can really tell us much about how to proceed in the future. For numerous reasons it seems to me that the modern period is quite unique and demands new resolutions to its problems. We should not forget the past, but since new technologies and new forms of social organisation *alter what is possible*, neither can we rely on it. Thus in my view the neo-tribalist model is inadequate.

Jeremy Faull is right that the basic proposition of "Stable Society" is that "society is a system, and therefore like all other systems (is) susceptible to the laws of General Systems Theory . . .". Unlike him, however, I do not find this proposition either "valid" or "useful" neither do I believe that it provides "a valuable tool for analysing our society". On the contrary, it seems to me that the attempt to apply such a theory to society and to derive normative rules therefrom is fundamentally suspect from the outset. Systems theory as I understand the term, is of greatest value when it is used to study things and processes that can be quantified, where schematic diagrams can represent that which is being studied without misrepresentation. But people are not things, neither are they passive cyphers to be slotted into some grandiose theory. Their motivations, qualities and capacities cannot be readily measured.

Nor is society merely "a system". It may be tempting to try and abstract what one believes are its essential features and to *call* these parts of a system, but then the greater part of what we mean by "society" has slipped through the analytical net. What is more, our understanding of social phenomena is very limited and is complicated by many ambiguities and differences of interpretation. To pretend otherwise is to skate over the hidden complexities and ignore numerous important problems. It is to court reductionism and to forget that different phenomena must be addressed at their appropriate level of explanation.

The idea of a "stable society" has its attractions, but I believe we should approach it with caution. While it may legitimately function as a kind of utopian slogan, what evidence do we have that it will ever be an achievable goal? Even if we had the power to create an ecological paradise (which we do not), recycled all our raw materials, utilised only energy "income", avoided pollution etc., we could still never guarantee "stability". For one thing society is not, and hopefully never will be, wholly controllable. Given that we cannot return to a state of pre-industrial "harmony" there are many things that would make complete stability unattainable. For example, differences of interest would still create internal conflicts, external influences could not be excluded and science and technology would probably continue to alter the dimensions of the possible. I conclude that while the idea may have some inspirational value, in fact the only truly stable society is a dead one! It may therefore be better to adopt the more modest and realistic goal of working for a more *sustainable* and *equitable* society.

This should not be taken to mean that we do not need theories. However, coherent policies require sound theories, and I believe that we need to generate alternatives to those which issue from Wadebridge. We need theories that explore their own limitations as well as their assumed strengths, theories that try to be modest and direct and which speak to people of the things which concern them. How can we generate such theories? ECONEWS is undoubtedly a great step forward, but a present there is only room for a small minority to have their say. Why not expand Policy Forum into a separate publication devoted entirely to policy issues?

Yours sincerely,

Richard A. Slaughter.

## The consequences of decadent thinking

76, Lower Oldfield Park,  
Bath

Dear Sir,

The anarchist fringe of the Ecology Party has received a welcome boost with the appointment of the new editor of ECONEWS.

The present N.E.C. is still dominated by those with centralist and bureaucratic tendencies, who tend to dwell in the decadent big cities and not to have had much involvement with local branches — I have even heard such execrable phrases as 'strong leadership' being trumpeted, and there is talk of amending the Constitution so that people might remain more than 3 years on the N.E.C. This is most unhealthy. The last things we want are 'prima donnas' and personality cults.

A perfect example of the kind of cock-up caused directly by decadent thinking is the arrangement to have this year's National Conference in an area where there were absolutely no local members, let alone branches (Keele, Staffs.), purely because it was the cheapest place on offer after a quick and inadequate search.

David Taylor has consequently had to organise it from about 200 miles away in Bath at a huge unnecessary cost in energy and resources. He has done his best, but still the nearest camp-site is 5 miles away, so there is built-in preferential treatment for the rich city-slickers without young families.

Such matters should always involve a strong branch as a sine qua non of what the Ecology Party is preaching, and I find the failure of the N.E.C. to realise this very disturbing.

Yours regionally,

Richard Carder

### BE BRIEF!

Please keep all correspondence as concise as possible. We receive many more letters than we can possibly publish, but attempt to print a representative selection.

# LETTERS

## Keeping politics out of ecology

2a Nugent Terrace,  
London, NW8.

Dear Editor and Readers,

I would like to write in support of your correspondent Stephen Twine in May's Newsletter. Like him, I'm disturbed by the Ecology Party avoiding the issue of relating to traditional left-right politics.

I believe there is a clear connection between exploiting nature and exploiting people. Just as we need to understand how humankind systematically exploits nature, so we need to understand the structural exploitation that goes on within the system that is human society. We need to understand it and we need to take a position on it.

I'm not saying we should adopt a conventional socialist or Marxist line. That would be impossible for several reasons. First, conventional Marxism ignores ecology. According to Marx, natural resources are the 'gifts of nature', to be used for the benefit of Man to the limit of productive development. Virtually no economist differs. Well, as everyone is beginning to see, the gifts are drying up, an understanding basic to the ecologist's position. Second, conventional Marxism, and revolutionary organisations, are strongly authoritarian and to a great extent centralist, whatever they may claim. We could say they extend and continue the Judaeo-Christian, Man-centred, patriarchal tradition which itself gave rise to capitalism. Again, this runs against the commitment to devolution and local power basic to an ecological view. Third, Marxists believe that the working class is the instrument of liberation, which will come about through struggle and conflict. Ecologists will have difficulties with at least the second part of this belief, and the first too except in a rather qualified form.

However, as a way of understanding our society as a system in which some people structurally exploit others, a Marxist, socialist picture seems to me by far the most useful and illuminating — the only one worth taking seriously, in fact. And, further, this picture seems to me indispensable to carrying such an understanding on, so as to encompass the

inevitable connection between this structural exploitation within our society as it has evolved, and its relationship with the rest of nature. As Stephen Twine said in his letter, it is the Capitalist society based on profit that Eco policies are demanding an end to.

Yet, as he went on to say, the word Capitalism is taboo. We can't embrace a Marxist analysis and strategy as they stand: so then we must make our own political analysis, which relates to existing political positions. It is not enough to say we're operating on a different dimension. Yes, it is true that the idea of 'self-reliance' is closer to conservative philosophy than to labour, to give an example. But we have to see clearly how conservative self-reliance, through its basis in the economic doctrine of *laissez-faire* and the practical consequences this gives it, is a fraud, so far as the decentralised, non-competitive, non-market orientated philosophy which I take to be essential to ecology is concerned. This is the sort of analysis we need to pursue.

I don't want to be divisive. It's just that the issue will have to be faced some time. We can't keep politics out of ecology! We all know that such an attempt is itself a political position.

I would like to make contact with others who feel as I do, perhaps with the idea of preparing a paper.

Yours.

Tom Osborn.

### Simplistic two dimensional political spectrum

c/o 1 Lynton Green,  
College Road,  
Maidenhead,  
Berkshire.

Dear Sir,

In the May/June Newsletter, Stephen Twine criticised the Ecology Party for not calling itself "Left wing" or specifically condemning "capitalist society". He can probably best be answered with an attempt to define these two terms.

The label "Left wing" originated in France after the 1789 revolution and was applied to the most "radical" political groups — at that time the Republican, Anti-Clerical factions. In time, the more "radical" ideologies of Socialism and Communism inherited this position on

the "Left". It "Left wing" is defined as "radical", or demanding big changes in the social system, then the Ecology Party's policies would place it further to the "Left" than most of the socialist organizations that wish to preserve a highly industrialized, growth oriented society. (I am quite sure incidentally, that most Eco members *are* aware of the implications of their policies.) On the other hand, if by "Left wing" Stephen means socialist, many of the Party's policies would disqualify it from bearing such a label.

Ecologists do not condemn free enterprise per se. In fact they believe that interference by the State in an individual's affairs should be reduced to a minimum. What is condemned is the disproportionate concern for materialistic rather than personal values, and the loss of control over his life by an ordinary person to large bureaucratic organizations. These criticisms can be applied equally to both the Western "capitalist" countries and to the richer socialist/communist ones. It is the "technostructure" (to use J.K. Galbraith's term) which has emerged in the modern industrial state, that we attack.

Perhaps as a "true" socialist, Stephen would include the Soviet Union — for example — in his list of "capitalist societies". If therefore "capitalist societies" are defined as highly industrialized states striving to increase rapidly their output of material goods, the Ecology Party is indeed seeking an end to them. However, I prefer to define Socialism as a system in which there is common (= State?) ownership of the means of production. The Soviet Union is thus a Socialist and not a capitalist society. Eco is opposed to characteristics of both, not necessarily to all the principles upon which they are based.

The Ecology Party shares many of the ideals of the various socialist theories. In fact it could make use of the 1848 "Communist Manifesto" with relatively few alterations. But there are differences. For example, ownership of land and capital by individuals on a small scale is implicitly encouraged. Moreover there is an appreciation of many of the traditional British moral (bourgeois) values, which are so often scorned by socialists. Ecology cannot therefore comfortably be slotted into a simplistic two dimensional Socialist/Capitalist political spectrum.

Yours faithfully.

Mike Landon.

# LETTERS

## Why Eco is not 'socialism with a green face'

20 Partridge Road,  
Aylsham,  
Norfolk.

Dear Sir,

Stephen Twine ("Left or Right", Econews No. 2) suggests that Eco is a party of the Left which has an important ecological perspective neglected by other socialist parties. I would like to make the following points in response.

(1) A common feature of all forms of socialism is that it claims to represent the interests of one social class (the working class, the people, workers and peasants; formulations differ) seen as in opposition to another class (the capital owners, the ruling class). Eco, in that it places its central emphasis upon the need to devolve our present hierarchic, centralised industrial society, represents the class interests of no one particular social class in our existing society.

(2) Socialism evolved within the industrial society, and might be said to be a response to some of the most blatant injustices of that society. The whole language of socialism and the conceptual categories within the bounds of which the idea (or ideas) of socialism has its being, is a product of the society which Eco seeks to transcend: we are not interested in solutions to problems within the context of a society we see as inherently unstable and running out of time.

To the extent that Eco's demand for democracy, freedom and justice within the context of a stable ecologically viable and self-regulating society might coincide with some of the traditional demands of some forms of socialism, I suppose there is a vague sense in which Eco could be said to be a socialist party. However, in that many forms of socialism push for a world wide extension of the destructive, barbarising consumer binge presently indulged in by the privileged (!) few in the industrially developed (!) world, and see this as the way to advance the condition of the oppressed masses, Eco is not socialist. Just as there is nothing in Eco policy to comfort capitalist vested interest, neither does Eco policy correspond to the expansionist dreams of many socialists.

Rather than allow ourselves to be labelled Left, Centre or Right, I hope that Eco will continue to refuse typecasting in such terms. The political spectrum of a defunct society has little value to a party intent on destroying all the classes of existing society. Eco is not socialism with a green face: it is ecological good sense which offers the chance to accomplish what more limited doctrines, socialism among them, sought to achieve. By seeking to cure the disease, not just the symptoms, Eco holds out a promise far greater than do doctrines content to make changes within the malignant society of today.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Smith.

## Neither right or left, but straight ahead

Achandunie,  
Alness,  
Ross-Shire.

Dear Sir,

As a new member of the Ecology Party, one of the first letters I came across in Econews was a demand for the party to come out clearly for the Left or Right wing — and stating a personal view that our principles are, of necessity, of the Left.

I urge most strongly that the Party should do no such thing. Surely the whole point of the Ecologist ideology is to create a new society, unbiased by outdated political prejudice. Neither right or left please, but straight ahead.

Yours faithfully,

Janet M. Charmier.

## Abortion — as positive as factory farming?

5 Queensland Avenue,  
London, SW19.

Dear Sir,

I am disturbed by the evident approval with which Teddy Goldsmith speaks of the Italian Radical Party's support for legalized abortion, in the article "Italian Radicals turn green" (Newsletter No. 2).

Surely abortion is a prime example of the sort of brutal short-term "problem solving" which the Ecology Party is

trying to combat. The problem which it tries to deal with is, of course, as real as that of world hunger, but as a "solution" it is about as positive as factory farming. It is no ecological answer to the desperation of a woman expecting a child she feels unable to cope with to kill that child, not only denying his right to live, but also grossly abusing the mother's body, storing up serious longterm physical and psychological problems for her.

I joined the Ecology Party because it seemed to me to be committed to the long term solution of real problems, rejecting the easy expediency of accepting evils which provide temporary short term answers.

The human problems with which abortion attempts to deal can only be solved in the long term. Firstly women must learn to be aware of and in control of their own fertility: this is a matter not of handing out drugs, but of education. Secondly, we need a society which supports every woman bearing a child, which has a place for the so-called inadequate, for the weak and handicapped, as well as for the strong and "perfect", and which does not regard fertility as a disease to be dealt with hastily and clinically.

Let us be consistent. If we reject brutality and the oppression of the weak, and support human rights in some areas of life, must we not do so in all areas? And who is weaker and more in need of having his rights defended than the unborn child?

I would be interested to know the views of other Ecology Party members on this question.

Yours sincerely,

Rosanna Summers

## EUROPEAN ELECTIONS SHOCK — HOW LORD GNOME VOTED

LORD NIKOLAI TOLSTOY (Conservative)	516,712
FRED BUNG (Labour)	86,414
JEREMY FOTHERINGTON-THOMAS (Liberal)	14,614
JONATHAN WHOLEMEAL-PORRIDGE (Ecological Party)	6
DOSTOIEVSKY SPARTOV (Workers' Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Broad Left Progressive Alliance)	0
	Maj. 430,298

(From Private Eye)

# NEC REPORT

NEC REPORT BY ECOBUG

## First steps towards a London headquarters

The atmosphere in NEC meetings has changed perceptibly. It has been somewhat more relaxed and more willing to think about the future development of the Party.

The two issues which have dominated discussion in the last two NEC meetings (20th May and 16th June) have been the Party's constitution and the need for a central Party office, together with a fund-raising programme to finance it.

In the last year the Party has grown from about 1000 members to over 3000 and we have to look to ways of ensuring that the Party's constitution has kept up with this dramatic growth. On the one hand we need to ensure that the NEC is as effective as possible. On the other hand, we must avoid excessive centralisation and we must encourage the development of the regions. The need to strike a balance between strength at the centre and strength of the regions has naturally stimulated a good deal of discussion. Regional independence has been jealously defended. Central effectiveness has been championed. The debate, however, was suddenly and very clearly clarified by a brilliant contribution from Andrea Hodgkinson, who reminded the NEC that there is a difference between "strength" and "power".

At that point we discovered to our relief that we were not involved in a power game; that indeed the NEC was genuinely seeking the best possible framework to take the Party into the next stage — that of making a genuinely significant contribution in British politics and beginning to attract mass support in both membership and votes.

All the same, we are still in an interim stage, and the immediate issue turned on the nature of the NEC following the Keele conference in September. The constitution allows for three members of the NEC who are not regional representatives. Since only a minority of regions has so far elected representatives to the NEC, it seemed appropriate to propose that for the time being an additional three members of the NEC should be elected nationally. So, a total of six nationally elected members.

How should they be elected? Should it be by post? or should it be by a vote at the conference?

The argument in favour of using postal votes is that it allows more members of the Party to take part in the elections. We are expecting about 350 people at the conference; that means that if all the NEC national representatives were to be elected at the conference, 90% of the Party would in effect be deprived of their vote.

The argument in favour of electing NEC representatives at the conference is that we now have many new members and it is to be hoped that a number of these will be willing and able to serve on the NEC. It would be a pity if, owing to constitutional procedure, some outstanding people at the conference were deprived of a place on the NEC next year. The postal vote could thus have the effect of ensuring that the "old guard" was returned and this would be quite contrary to the intention of the Party to make the fullest use of the talents and ideas available to it.

A compromise was reached; four members will be elected on the postal vote. Two will be elected at the conference.

This seemed to be a simple solution to come to after so much discussion but it did also raise a number of associated issues:

1. Whether next year's NEC should, like the NEC to date, be responsible for the full range of issues from policy to election management and Party administration.
2. How far the NEC should delegate specific problems to working groups.
3. Whether these groups should be formalised into standing committees dealing with administration, policy etc.
4. If there is a standing committee on policy, how the two different forms of policy are to be distinguished:

(a) There is the definition of written Party policy as in the new Manifesto being worked out with branches.

(b) There is the related but separate need for immediate response to day to day issues — the Ecology Party is now becoming significant enough to have to be ready with a response on budgets, energy policies, OPEC announcements, summit meetings etc.

So the working party on the constitution was given what it asked for, guidance by the NEC on factors to take into account in its deliberations.

The second major issue was that of a head office for the Ecology Party and ways to finance it. At present the Party has two publicly advertised addresses:

1. Andrea Hodgkinson's address in Norwich; she is responsible for receiving written enquiries from the public for membership and literature.
2. David Fleming's flat in London. He is responsible for dealing with the press and with a large number of both written and telephone enquiries from the public.

The meeting identified the following tasks for a central Ecology Party office:

**(a) Policy Related**

1. Research
2. Press contacts
3. Library and statistics
4. Ability to provide instant comment on policy issues

**(b) Administration**

1. Sending out literature
2. Answering telephone and written enquiries from the public.
3. Arranging speakers
4. Acting as a central point for co-ordination with branches.

The present system is working tolerably well but it does have some disadvantages. The first is that Andrea will shortly be leaving for the Sudan. The second is that the volume of work on both policy and administration which is channelled through the existing London telephone number and address is now such that it is not practicable to handle without paid help.

Taking into account the volume of work to be done over the next few years, the NEC agreed that the Party should now start working seriously towards a London headquarters with full time staff. Work on the fund raising campaign is being put in hand.

Ecobug

# BRANCH NEWS

## Branch network still growing

Established branches have been busy consolidating their position after the General Election, while new branches are being formed at a bewildering rate. Alan Clarke reports from around the regions.

### North West

Plenty of activity here, as the latest report from Regional Organizer John Wareing clearly shows. New branches have been formed in Manchester, where the contact is Sion Haworth, 26 Rusholme Place, Victoria Park, Manchester (061-224-2933 evenings), and in the Wirral, where members should get in touch with Robert Anderson, 53 Milton Road, Claughton, Birkenhead (051-652-2645). There are also branches in the process of formation in Warrington – Jon Warden, 60 Ackers Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington (0925-63726) – and the Lake District – Fenwick Pattison, Bowmanstead, Coniston, Cumbria (Coniston 235).

Plans are already being made for even more new branches, and John Wareing would be pleased to hear from interested parties in Chester (still!), Preston, Wigan, Bolton, Blackpool and the Crewe/Nantwich area. John is also seeking to establish eco-colonies in the Far North and would like to hear from persons willing to organize branches in Carlisle and in the North East, particularly the Newcastle/Sunderland area.

Besides all this, there have been meetings in St Helens (June 13th) and Blackburn (June 25th). I understand that possible development in Burnley and Chorley was on the Agenda of the Blackburn meeting and I look forward to more news of this. Finally, John Wareing has asked me to print his 'phone number (0257-452928), which has been so far inadvertently omitted from "Noticeboard" on the back page.

### South West

New branches here too, but the main task now is certainly the reorganization of existing branches that have been swamped by new members as a result of the General Election and are now seeking to split up into more localized and manageable units. For Bristol and Bath, enquiries are now being dealt with at ward level, and I know that Maurice Weekes and Don Grimes are keen to appoint 'Shadow Councillors' as quickly as possible in order to prepare for serious campaigns in the next district elections.

The Devon Ecology Party has disappeared and been replaced by branches (some still in the process of formation) in Exeter, Torbay, Barnstaple, Honiton and Exmouth. Plymouth is about to become a separate entity and members should contact John Chadwick at 76 Stefan Close, Hooe, Plymstock, Plymouth for further details.

Richard Carder, South-West Regional Organizer, and David Kerridge, who fought South Gloucester in the General Election are between themselves trying to establish branches in Gloucestershire, one of the few areas not really covered by the existing branch network, and meetings have been held in Cheltenham (July 2nd) and Stroud (July 4th).

There will be a Regional Admin/Policy Conference on July 7th, the second annual meeting of its kind. The morning session,

I understand, will be given over to analysis of the Somerset branch report on Regional Organization and the afternoon session will work over some policy ideas, with the Party AGM in September in mind. No doubt someone will furnish me with a copy of the minutes of this meeting in time for the next ECONEWS.

### North East

No Leeds newsletter to work on this time round, but David Wright has informed me of the recent formation of a Batley & Morley constituency branch. Two meetings have been held so far, on a roughly tri-weekly basis, and new members or individuals requiring further information should contact David at 4 Broomdale Road, Soothill, Batley, WF17 6NL, or telephone the branch chairman, Clive Lord, on Batley 472767.

A meeting was held on July 4th to inaugurate a branch in Lancaster – the moving spirits appear to be Richard Slaughter and Dick Frost (Tel. Bentham Yorks 61277).

### East Midlands

Dave Whitebread reports that the region now has 8 fully formed branches; with contact numbers as follows.

Derby: Paul Jeffels (Derby 366234)  
 Nottingham: Desley Radmall (Nottingham 232410)  
 Northampton: Helen Young (Northampton 27441)  
 Caistor: Jeff & Judy Dixon (Caistor 851485)  
 Lincoln: Terry Coupland (Bardney 776)  
 Louth: Rod Newby (Marshchapel 251)  
 Loughborough: Dave Whitebread (Leicester 879320)  
 Leicester: Ted Smith (Leicester 552628)

A South Lincolnshire branch will hopefully have been formed by the middle of July – the contact here is Sue Evans (Friskney 476).

### Wales

News has come in of a new West Glamorgan branch, which, for the time being at least will be responsible for the county as a whole. Officers appointed so far are Christopher West (Chairman), Huw Lewis (Treasurer), and Dave Rowsell (Secretary), who can be contacted at 42 Wyngarth, Winch Wen, Swansea (Swansea 71027). Anything happening in Cardiff yet?

### South East

Basil Mager has sent in an up to date list of branch secretaries and contacts as follows:

Berkshire: Chris Parr, 106 London Road, Reading.  
 Reading: Stuart McBurney, 25 DeBeauvoir Road, Reading.  
 Bracknell: June Smith, 24 Staverton Close, Bracknell.  
 Surrey: Peter Draper, 49 Granville Road, Oxted, Surrey.  
 Mrs P. Lejeune, 21 Verdayne Gardens, Warlingham.  
 Allan Bula, 15 Glebe Court, Cross Lanes, Guildford.  
 Basingstoke: Robert Wilson, 38 Lancaster Road, Basingstoke.  
 Kent: Celia Keane, 35 Stuart Road, Gillingham. (Medway 51985)  
 East Kent: Graham Knight, 15 Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford, Kent.  
 Sevenoaks: Mrs R.D. Vanzinderen Bakker, 46 Amherst Road, Sevenoaks.  
 West Sussex: Mrs Bagnall, The Brackens, Durfold Wood, Plaistow, Billingshurst, W. Sussex  
 Worthing: Oliver Gilbert, 1 Quinta Carmen, West Parade, Worthing, Sussex  
 East Sussex: Anne Rix, 90 High Street, Heathfield.



# GREEN POLITICS

## Ten ecologists at Strasbourg

If 1979 has proved anything, it is that newscasters *can* pronounce 'Ecologist' without having to affect an embarrassed smile. Having started the year as a minority party, dismissed as well-intentioned cranks by the media, the Ecology Party has won the respect of politicians and political commentators alike. No longer the butt of cheap jokes (I remember one journalist chewing up an Eco pamphlet on television to show 'how natural it was') the Ecologists now constitute Britain's fourth political party; indeed Mrs Shirley Williams, ousted from her seat at the General Election, has even conceded that it was largely Eco's success at the polls in May which prompted the Labour Party's to rethink its present environmental policy.

The results of the European Elections have further strengthened the Ecology Party's position, not only by proving that the results they gained in May were not flash-in-the-pan successes but also by demonstrating the extent of popular support for ecological policies *throughout* Europe.

## Greatest blow in France

Perhaps the greatest blow to the Ecologists came in France, where Europe-Ecologie gained 4.4 per cent of the national vote — a mere 0.6 per cent below the five per cent barrier that, once passed, would have allowed them four MPs at Strasbourg. The candidates are now in severe financial difficulties; in order to stand at the election, all parties had to furnish a deposit of three and a half million francs (three hundred thousand pounds) to pay for the printing and posting of electoral addresses on a national scale. Europe-Ecologie has now lost that deposit and, at least one candidate has been forced to sell her home to help pay the necessary money; others have taken out second mortgages. Europe-Ecologie points out that the elections were biased from the very start in favour of the major parties; minority 'lists' were only granted four minutes and seventeen seconds on television for their electoral broadcasts; and unlike the major parties, they received no million franc subsidy to help pay for their campaign. Internal splits also damaged the ecological cause; Friends of the Earth, in particular, refused to throw their weight behind Europe-Ecologie, arguing that, whatever the results, the Ecologists would gain a bad image by standing at the elections (see *The Ecologist* May/June 1979).

## Good results

Despite the overall failure however ecological candidates achieved some good results. In Paris Europe-Ecologie gained 6 per cent of the vote, with the middle class areas proving most receptive to their message — the richer sixteenth and eighth arrondissement together with St. Denis, a communist suburb, were the only districts to register less than a 5 per cent poll for the ecologists. In the fifth arrondissement, where Brice Lalonde, a major figure in the French ecological movement, has been active for several years, the ecological candidate

polled 8.3 per cent, and in the sixth arrondissement 7.5 per cent. In the provinces, Solange Fernex, founder of Alsace's Ecologie et Survie gained 10.6 per cent in Haut-Rhin, 12.6 per cent in Colmar, 7.6 per cent in Bas-Rhin and 9.4 per cent in Strasbourg — all areas of her constituency threatened by France's nuclear programme. In Cherbourg and district around La Hague (France's reprocessing plant), the ecology candidate polled 8.8 per cent.

## Nuclear plants

The same pattern of high ecology votes in areas where nuclear plants are under construction was seen in Germany; around Gorleben, for instance, the Greens won 14.4 per cent of the vote. The overall result in Germany, however, was disappointing — 3.2 per cent, again too low to elect a representative at Strasbourg. Nevertheless, Willy Brandt, the former Chancellor, was concerned enough by the results, to lambast the Greens publicly for having taken votes from his Social Democrat Party, allowing a clear majority for the Christian Democrat at Strasbourg.

The Ecologists gained similar results in Belgium with 3.4 per cent of the vote. Had their campaign been better orchestrated — it was launched late and with little preparation — the results would certainly have been higher. In many French speaking areas for instance, candidates consistently polled 5 per cent or more of the votes, and undoubtedly there was much support that was left untapped.

Perhaps it is significant, the only countries to return Eco-MPs were those in which Green candidates did not stand under the Ecologists banner. In Denmark, three candidates who had signed Ecoropa's *Declaration for a Green Europe* and who are well known for their ecological views were elected; all had stood on an anti-common market ticket. In Holland, four Greens were elected; two had stood as Christian Democrats; one as a Liberal; and one as a Socialist. Significantly the Dutch Radical Party — the closest thing to an Ecology party in Holland — only 1.6 per cent of the vote, failing to return any candidates. In Italy on the other hand, the Radical Party — fully fledged ecology party, see *The Ecologist* May/June 1979 — gained three seats at Strasbourg; Emma Bonino and Marco Panella, both staunch supporters of the ecological cause, being elected.

## Disappointed

Whilst Ecologists throughout Europe might be disappointed with their overall result, there is no doubt of the impact they made by standing at the elections. Midway through the Dutch campaign, for example, the Chairman of the Dutch Union of Policemen, declared that his members would not help the Government suppress demonstrations against the dumping of radioactive waste in salt mines *even if* civil disobedience was involved. 'We also have children and fear the danger of this toxic waste,' he said. 'Our task is to maintain public order and when the government is destroying that order we can no longer obey'. It looks too as if workers at the company responsible for dumping Holland's radioactive waste in the North Sea will also strike. Undoubtedly the climate of public opinion is at last beginning to change — and for that Ecologists can claim a large measure of credit.

Nicholas Hildyard

# POLICY FORUM

## National Incomes Scheme reconsidered

Clive Lord has now for some years been promoting the idea of a National Incomes Scheme. He has every justification for doing so since this proposal is included in the Manifesto.

It is not spelt out in any detail in the Manifesto. All it says is that of the "five possible Social Welfare strategies available to any society" — these are listed — the only one which meets the requirements of a sustainable and compassionate society is that of "basic needs provided unconditionally"

There are, of course, a number of ways of attempting to meet such basic needs and Clive Lord's interpretation of the National Incomes Scheme is based on the principle that absolutely everyone would get a government payment which, on its own, would be sufficient to provide basic needs. This would represent a sharp break with the normal system of social security payments, supplementary benefits etc., since it would give payments to everyone whether they were earning money or not, and regardless of how much or how little money they were earning.

At first sight this seems a very attractive prospect; everyone would receive payments of say £2000 a year, so that they would have the option of whether to work or not. They would be guaranteed unconditional material security. Pressure to continue to work in boring and environmentally damaging jobs would be off. On second thoughts, however, there must be a catch in this, if everyone is to be paid their £2000 a year where is the money to come from? Are we to be reduced to the position of the Weimar Republic in which a government solves its economic problems by printing large quantities of pound notes? If not, who is to pay? Clive has tackled this problem in his paper by proposing that even though everyone would receive their payments, much of this would be in the form of a "tax credit". A tax credit is a system of credit cards which could be used in part payment of income tax liabilities or, where income tax liability is below the value of the credit cards, repayable in cash.

This means that the higher earning groups would receive these credit cards, but that the cost of this would be offset by a very much higher tax rate. The net effect of this would be that the lower income groups would receive additional state benefits which were not in practice available to the higher income groups — indeed this scheme is a form of transfer of wealth and earnings from the higher income groups to the lower income groups roughly along the lines with which we have become familiar during the last thirty years of the welfare state.

So in principle, the National Income Scheme is perfectly acceptable and humane. What is the difference between the National Incomes Scheme and the present system of supplementary benefits?

Well, the answer to this has been discussed by a number of economists during the last decade. For example, the *Economist* on the 24th July 1976, page 60, wrote "who pays the highest rate of tax on every extra pound he earns? Not, under Britain's crazy tax and welfare system, the millionaire, but the family man earning £1500—£2200 per year."

In other words the lower income groups are scotched by what is widely known as the "poverty trap" which was also castigated in a Workers Educational Association leaflet (June 1976),

as having a destructive effect on the living standards of the lower paid.

Clive is, therefore, in the best economist's tradition in looking for a form of standard payment which does not bring about the absurd situation by which lower paid people actually lose money when they start to work. On the other hand, Clive takes the matter considerably further than is normal by claiming some very considerable advantages — advantages which have not been claimed before:

"A National Income/Tax Credit scheme thus combines security with a work incentive regardless of the level of employment, yet it would make more work available. Countless low paid, but mutually beneficial jobs would open up spontaneously, and it would be work which actually needed doing, not artificial bureaucratic job creation. Until now, a recession has always posed a nightmare dilemma of low wages or high unemployment (though Welfare State benefits rule out the first option). With Tax Credits this becomes a positive, personal choice between leisure and affluence.

The crucial point is that instead of the dreadful distinction between work and unemployment, there would be a continuum from the Nature-loving hippie who is content with basic subsistence, to the consumer who is willing to work long hours in a hard, unpleasant job, but who still expects the full benefits of the affluent society in return. Unemployment can be consigned to history. Perhaps I had better repeat that. The term 'unemployment' becomes meaningless with Tax Credits."

It sounds good. The trouble is that as recession deepens the number of people who are above the cut-off point — the point at which they start contributing towards the cost of the Scheme rather than drawing from it, declines — so you end up with more and more people claiming their payments and fewer and fewer people providing the money. This may lead to two outcomes, neither of which make life any easier for the people below the poverty line:

1. Inflation — so that the value of your national income payments declines.
2. Deficit in the funds available to the National Incomes Scheme so that the nominal value as well as the real value of your payments declines.

So the awful truth is that in the event of inflation, the formal economy alone provides no hiding place; there simply are no soft options which allow standards of living to be maintained in a declining formal economy, unless, at the same time, a sustainable economy is being built up to provide the necessities of life without dependence upon the conventional industrial state.

Clive doesn't claim that his system would continue to operate successfully in the event of deep recession. But he does claim that it would be a more successful means of social welfare than our present scheme of supplementary benefits. This may very well be true, and there is every reason for the Ecology Party to explore formats for a National Incomes Scheme, just as many other economists are exploring the same Scheme under different names. The Tory Party published a Green Paper in 1972 *Proposals for a Tax Credit System* and the Bow Group published a Paper by Andrew Dalton and others *A Chancellor's Primer* (1976), both of which made valid attempts to show how our present welfare system can be put on a saner basis. Colin Clark in *Poverty Before Politics* (Hobart Paper, 1977), proposes his own scheme which has a "cut-out"

*continued on back page*

# REVIEWS

## Changing our attitudes to work and employment

Illich, Ivan: "The right to useful unemployment and its professional enemies." London, Marion Boyars, 1978

It does not take a crystal ball to know that unemployment will be a major issue of the 1980's. It is, therefore, important for us to understand as much as we can about the nature and processes of employment and unemployment. Illich's recent work on 'The right to useful unemployment' sets traditional approaches aside and is seminal to the discussion. It is required reading for political ecologists.

Illich is the major social critic of the 1970's. 'De-schooling society' was his first work with a major impact on this side of the Atlantic. It was one of a number of radical and thought-provoking books around on education in the early 70's, post flower-power but still heady days, and it took its place with works by John Holt, Everett Reimer and Paul Goodman to name but a few. But Illich went on to widen the attack and moved away from education to carry out an intellectual bombardment on the expert and the professional generally, who he believes are slowly sapping our humanity, our creativity, our autonomy. 'De-schooling society' questioned the rights of schools to define learning. Now Illich broadens the attack to all professionals, seeing them as disablers, who define our deficiencies in subtle ways and plug us into a debilitating and near addictive consumerism.

It is increasingly difficult for us to use environmental resources, or our own personal endowments even, in an autonomous way. The opportunity to experience personal and social satisfactions without the act of consumption is being denied us. We have a culture where the best things in life are no longer free. "Making do without consumption becomes impossible".

Illich shows with uncomfortable clarity that "wherever the shadow of economic growth touches us, we are left useless unless employed on a job engaged on consumption". We are, he argues, reaching a point where it is well nigh impossible for us to be useful to our self or our fellows outside employment.

Illich illustrates his argument in a number of ways and one of the most interesting is through an analysis of tools. In this he goes back to an earlier book "Tools for conviviality" showing that man in the past has rarely used tools to produce for a 'market', he has sometimes used them for the making of a pyramid or a cathedral, but most of the time they have been used for domestic production, creating use-values and bringing satisfactions to the tool user. The tool now is used within a technological context as a producer of marketable staples. In order to become more 'efficient' the tool becomes complex and inscrutable and requires special operators. The special operators need special training in managing the tools and in institutional allegiance. They might it seems, be security risks.

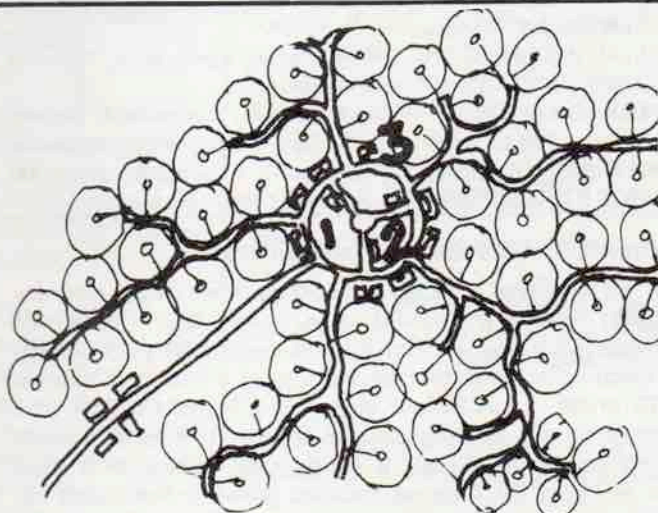
In this process man is having difficulty shaping his needs. Confusions between needs and rights abound. Indeed no sooner does a 'need' become professionally certified than it becomes changed into a right. We have rights to medical care, to education, to legal aid. Recently banners being carried by

redundant workers have proclaimed the right to work. Are the banners distinguishing between work and paid employment? These confusions need to be thoroughly explored.

Illich's work at this stage does not explore those confusions: he merely points them out through a number of powerful insights into the nature of employment. His own beliefs reflect a value system that is deeply concerned with human creativity — our activities should truly generate satisfactions. These satisfactions he suggests, are mainly within the area of useful unemployment.

As ecologists we have to go further and we need to look at ways in which eco-values can be worked for in the present context of fast growing unemployment. There may be a number of alternatives. One way would be to begin the long haul to self-employment and self esteem. Other routes might be via collectives, co-operatives or the short term creation of communal institutions to achieve fairly specific and agreed ends. Interim measures may see the development of ideas of payment for work in terms of fees rather than wages or salary, working by contract rather than by long term employment, negotiating for a number of hours to be worked rather than the employer expecting to buy your whole working life. Employment at present with its paraphernalia of superannuation, insurance, PAYE, tenure etc. can lock people into jobs they no longer find satisfying and which may be filling the needs of institutions and bureaucracies rather than those of human beings. Changes in the way we think about work and employment will come before political action. Illich's book is a good first step towards that re-evaluation.

Mike Holloway.



Not frogspawn, but a plan of a village designed for the day when not even our arms trade will be sufficient to buy in the food we need. Each house is surrounded by its own circular garden, large enough to supply the inhabitants with all their vegetable requirements. Why rounded? To leave space between the gardens for trees, play, maintenance of the water table and fertility, and for "a lively and flexible pattern of lanes and footpaths". This proposal is made by Herbert Girardet in "Land for the People"\*, a brilliant collection of essays addressed to the question "is a return to the land a realistic strategy or a romantic dream?" Although published in 1976, this book is still way ahead of the field. It gives ground for belief that a major shift of emphasis to agriculturally-based villages is possible. Since there isn't going to be any alternative, that's something of a comfort.

\*Crescent Books, 8A Leighton Crescent, London, NW5. £1.20.

# NOTICEBOARD

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- RON ANDREWS: 18 Cofton Lake Rd. Birmingham 45. 021 445 2576
- JOHN DAVENPORT: 2 The Old Vicarage, 26 Main Road, Kempsey, Worcester. 0905 820489.
- GUNDULA DOREY: 14 Goldney Road, Clifton, Bristol. 0272 26812 (Eve)
- JEREMY FAULL: Bosnieves, Withiel, Nr. Bodmin, Cornwall. 020 883 236. (Policy Co-ordinator)
- DAVID FLEMING: 104 South Hill Park, London NW3. 01 794 5644. (Press and Publicity).
- EDWARD GOLDSMITH: Whitehay, Whithiel, Nr. Bodmin, Cornwall. 020 883 237.
- ANDREA HODGKINSON: Flat 1, 217 Unthank Road, Norwich, Norfolk. 0603 501530. Deputy National Secretary.
- STEVE LAMBERT: 3 Howard Road, London E17. 01 520 0676. London Region Representative.
- JONATHON PORRITT: 57 Hamilton Terrace, London NW8. 01 286 6695. Vice Chairman.
- PETER SIZER: 9 Sherbourne Terrace, Clarendon Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. 0926 29875. Treasurer.
- DAVID TAYLOR: 13 St. James Square, Bath. 0225 319434. South West Region Representative.
- JONATHAN TYLER: 121 Selly Park Road, Birmingham 29. 021 472 1088. Chairman.
- LESLIE SPOOR: 55, Clermiston Road, Edinburgh. 031334 1510.
- BIFF VERNON: 29 Churchfields Rd., Beckenham, Kent. 01 658 4086. Membership Secretary.
- SALLY WILLINGTON: 278 Battersea Park Road, London SW11. 01 223 8574. National Secretary.
- PETER DRAPER: 49 Granville Road, Limpsfield, Oxted, Surrey. 08833 4161. South East Region Representative.
- KEITH RUSHWORTH: 8 The Mount, Alwoodley, Leeds 17. 0532 672198. Yorks & Humberside Representative.

## National Income Scheme reconsidered.

rate of 70%. That is to say, you get paid out of the National Incomes Scheme an amount equal to 70% of the difference between what you are earning and the cut-off point, which is measured in units to take account of inflation. A unit in 1976 prices is £31.25 per week for a married couple. The purpose of the 70% cut-out rate is to make sure that every pound you earn yourself is worth more to you than what you get from the National Incomes Scheme. This avoids the poverty trap and ensures that it is worth your while to work.

Alright, Clive wishes to propose a system in which not working is positively encouraged. The difficulty, of course, is that if enough people respond to this encouragement not to work, the system breaks down. Just look at what is at stake: in theory the National Incomes Scheme could be committed to paying out each year £63,000,000,000. If there are only a million people left working in Clive's recession, you never know, they might spend a good deal of their time in dispute with the tax man — their tax bill for social welfare *alone* would amount to £63,000 each.

So the idea is worth working on but we must not forget that no scheme relying on the formal economy alone is going to save our bacon in the long term.

David Fleming

## REGIONAL ORGANIZERS

- Scotland:** Leslie Spoor, 55 Clermiston Road, Edinburgh. 031 334 1510.
- Wales:** Peter Rout, 82 Grays Gardens, Criag-y-Rhacca, Machen, Newport, Gwent. 0222 861352.
- Yorks & Humberside:** Mike Sellers, 3 Spenccommon Lane, Tadcaster, Yorks. Boston Spa 842652.
- North West:** John Wareing, 329 The Green, Eccleston, Chorley, Lancs. 0257 452928.
- West Midlands:** Joe Bennett, 59 Selly Park Road, Birmingham 29. 021 472 2406.
- East Midlands:** Dave Whitebread, 8 Fir Tree Walk, Groby, Leicester. 0533 879320.
- East Anglia:** Andrea Hodgkinson, 217 Unthank Road, Norwich, Norfolk. 0603 501530.
- South East North:** Dean Wayland, 4 Yarmouth Road, Stevenage, Herts. 0438 68177.
- Greater London:** Jean Lambert, 3 Howard Road, London, E17. 01 520 0676.
- South East South:** Basil Mager, 1 Whitelodge, Collington Lane West, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex 04243 2908.
- South West:** Richard Carder, 76 Lower Oldfield Park, Bath, Avon. 0225 24531.

Regional Organizers still needed for Northern Ireland and the North. Contact Sally Willington, the National Secretary if you would like to volunteer.

## CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

The following items are available from 217 Unthank Road, Norwich:

- Election posters: 12p each.
- General posters: 12p each.
- A5 Publicity leaflets: 50p per 100.
- Introduction to the Party leaflets: £1.00 per 50. (Includes registration forms.)
- Registration forms: 25p per 50.
- Stickers: 14p per sheet of 6.
- A4 Letterheaded paper: £1.00 per 100 sheets.
- A5 Letterheaded paper: 80p per 100 sheets.
- A6 Letterheaded paper: 60p per 100 sheets.
- 1" Badges: 8p each.
- 1½" Badges: 10p each.
- 1¾" Badges: 15p each.
- The Real Alternative: 15p each.
- European Election Manifesto: 12p each.
- The Reckoning: 20p each.

For orders over £1.00, postage and packing is free. For orders less than £1.00, please include 10p.

## LOCAL ELECTIONS

Would all candidates in the recent local elections send full details of their results to Sally Willington, the National Secretary. Could they also send 6 copies of their election addresses etc., to Jonathan Tyler, for the Party archives.